

AGENDA ITEM III

PROPOSED ACADEMIC PROGRAM

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AT SHREVEPORT

M.S. in Counseling Psychology

STAFF COMMENT

During September 15-16, 2000, a team of expert external consultants engaged by the Board of Regents visited the campus of Louisiana State University-Shreveport to assess a proposed M.S. program in Counseling Psychology. The review team was composed of: Dr. Thomas Krieschok, University of Kansas (Chair); Dr. Dennis Kivlighan, University of Missouri; and Dr. Ronnie Priest, University of Memphis. Upon conclusion of their visit, the review team composed a report to the Regents documenting their findings and making recommendations. This report was submitted to the staff on October 16, 2000. The review team concluded that the proposed program should be approved; however, the team made eight suggestions for needed improvements to the proposal. On October 18, 2000, the staff forwarded the review team's report to LSU-S for its response. The University's response was received on November 16, 2000. The following staff summary assesses the quality of the University's response and makes recommendations regarding the proposed program.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The consultants' recommendations focused on four issues: Faculty, Curriculum, Student Recruitment/Retention, and Coordination of Student Training Activities with Louisiana Tech University.

1. Faculty

Report:

An additional two to three Counseling Psychologist faculty dedicated to this program will be needed.

Response:

The University agrees. There are three available, unfilled faculty slots which have been dedicated to this program; all are currently funded. Advertisements have already been posted in appropriate professional publications and application reviews will begin in December, 2000 and continue until all hires are selected.

Report:

The University shall expand upon its current efforts to recruit and fairly compensate appropriate adjunct faculty as needed.

Response:

The University agrees. In Fall, 2000, the Department of Psychology this semester employed 22 such individuals as adjunct professors. It is planned that such efforts will be expanded upon approval and implementation of the proposed program. LSU-S is fully committed to funding adequate numbers of adjunct faculty to serve in both the classroom and at practica sites at a salary level commensurate with similar services offered in the Shreveport/Bossier City area.

2. Curriculum

Report:

Remove dual undergraduate/graduate course listings in six courses required for the M.S. program.

Response:

The University agrees. Dual listings have been removed for four such courses; all are now exclusively graduate courses. The remaining two dually listed courses will be redesigned to provide for separate undergraduate/graduate courses.

Report:

Offer a basic “helping-skills” course. Separate the skills portion from the theories course or offer a two-semester sequence of theory and lab taken together.

Response:

The University agrees. A helping skills course has been added to the curriculum. Two existing have been reconfigured to accomplish the consultants’ suggestions regarding theory/lab content delivery. The 48-hour program schedule has been maintained by requiring a previous core introductory course as a prerequisite which should not affect students since most have already taken this course during their undergraduate studies.

Report:

Core faculty should supervise and assess practica coursework to some extent. This type of supervision would be essential, should the University decide to pursue CACREP accreditation.

Response:

The University agrees generally and is considering two possible course revisions which would affect this change. The Psychology faculty is cautious about the implication of explanatory comments by the review team accompanying this recommendation that appears to suggest that students would be involved in the administration of personality instrument. This type of activity is restricted under Louisiana law and practice to licensed professional Psychologists only.

Report:

The University should consider incorporating the School Guidance teacher certification program within the Department of Psychology. It could result in the more effective use of Psychology faculty resources through the sharing of common coursework and also act as an effective recruitment tool.

Response:

The University is seriously considering this recommendation and talks among faculty have begun regarding how to accomplish this change.

3. Student Recruitment and Retention

Report:

The Department should develop an aggressive student recruitment and retention plan with particular attention toward attracting and retaining minorities.

Response:

The University agrees. The Department has recently undertaken several initiatives designed to attract all types of students from within a 60-mile radius of the University. Steps have already been taken to attract funding to support more graduate assistantships (five are currently available).

4. Coordination of Student Training Activities with Louisiana Tech University

Report:

The Committee noted that Louisiana Tech University currently offers a M.S. program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology program at nearby Barksdale Airforce Base. The two universities should form a joint student training committee to result in the best use of valuable practica resources.

Response:

The University agrees. LSU-S proposes a subcommittee of the Counseling Psychology Training Committee, composed of representatives from LSU-S, Louisiana Tech, and local practica/internship agencies be formed to facilitate a coordinated, mutually enhancing experience for all students at all training sites.

STAFF SUMMARY

In general, LSU-S has responded to all consultants' recommendations in an appropriate manner. Most important is their commitment of three new faculty positions to support program implementation. In a few areas (i.e., curricular revisions affecting practica training, student recruitment/retention efforts, and coordination of practica training opportunities with Louisiana Tech), the University's responses are promising, but not definitive. Accordingly, while the staff supports the University's request for program approval, some future monitoring should be required to assure that the program is being implemented appropriately.

The staff notes that Academic Affairs Policy 2.13 - Professional Program Accreditation **does not require, but recommends accreditation** for this type of program through the Council on Accreditation for Counseling and Rehabilitation Education Programs (CACREP). LSU-S has indicated that they will likely pursue such accreditation in the near future.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant conditional approval for the request from Louisiana State University-Shreveport to establish an M.S. program in Counseling Psychology (CIP Code 42.0601) effective Fall, 2001, subject to the following stipulations:

- 1. By May 1, 2001, the University shall submit a progress report to the Commissioner of Higher Education updating efforts of LSU-S to hire three additional Counseling Psychology faculty, affect a coordinated student practica assignment process with Louisiana Tech University, and institute an aggressive minority student recruitment/retention plan.*
- 2. By May 1, 2002, the University shall submit a progress report to the Commissioner of Higher Education further updating efforts of LSU-S to accomplish items addressed in the previous progress report as necessary. In addition, the University will provide resolutions for any outstanding curricular issues.*

In accordance with Academic Affairs Policy 2.13 - Professional Program Accreditation, no professional accreditation is mandated for this program.